

PLANNING COMMISSION REPORT



MEETING DATE: July 12, 2006

ITEM NO. _____ GOAL: Coordinate Planning to Balance Infrastructure

SUBJECT Gateway Access Area/Desert Discovery Center - 10-UP-2006

REQUEST Request to approve a conditional municipal use permit for an access area for the McDowell Sonoran Preserve on 543+/- acres located at 18333 N. Thompson Peak Parkway with Single Family Residential District, Environmentally Sensitive Lands (R1-10/R1-18/R1-35 ESL) zoning.

Key Items for Consideration:

- This will be the major access area to the McDowell Sonoran Preserve.
- This site will be a staging area for access to and exploration of the Preserve and be used as an education and demonstration center that will enlighten citizens and guests about the unique features of the local desert.

Related Policies, References:

This facility is included in the master plans for the Desert Preserve and was anticipated in the various funding actions approved by the voters.

OWNER City of Scottsdale
Bob Cafarella
480-312-2577

APPLICANT CONTACT Bill Peifer
480-312-7869

LOCATION N. Thompson Peak Parkway between
Union Hills Drive and Bell Road

BACKGROUND

Zoning.

The primary site for the access facility is zoned R1-18 ESL. Adjacent areas that are part of the trail and interpretive areas leading out from the access facility are zoned R1-10 ESL, R1-35 ESL and COS ESL. These zoning district(s) allow for single-family neighborhoods and conservation areas.

General Plan.

The General Plan Land Use Element designates the property as Suburban Neighborhoods and Conservation Open Space. All of this property is located within the designated Recommended Study Boundary (RSB) for the Desert Preserve.



Context.

This facility will be located at the western edge of the McDowell Sonoran Preserve on the west side of the McDowell Mountains. The site for the Gateway Access facility is on relatively flat slopes below the base of the mountains and therefore is hidden from distant views.

Adjacent Uses and Zoning:

- North Various land uses including golf, recreational and residential in the DC Ranch master planned development zoned R1-10 ESL and R1-18 ESL
- South Residential neighborhoods in the McDowell Mountain Ranch master planned development zoned R1-7 ESL, R1-10 ESL and R1-18 ESL
- East Natural desert in and around the McDowell Mountains zoned R1-35 ESL and COS ESL
- West Future residential neighborhoods being developed in the Windgate Ranch development zoned R1-7 ESL and R1-10 ESL

**APPLICANT'S
PROPOSAL****Goal/Purpose of Request.**

The proposal is to establish an approved site plan for a large access and interpretive center as a part of the McDowell Sonoran Preserve. The major components of the facility include: a large (524 spaces) parking area; a "Desert Discovery Center" that will serve as the primary educational facility; a small café in conjunction with the Center; a smaller administrative and support building; and a series of interpretive trails and gathering sites.

These facilities will be phased, with the administrative building, trails and two-thirds of the parking area included in the first phase, and an additional trailhead and parking in the second phase.

This site will be accessed off of Thompson Peak Parkway, which is currently being constructed in this area. The entrance drive will share a median break with the developing residential project that is on the west side of Thompson Peak Parkway.

The facility will be operated as a 'sunup to sundown' site except for special evening events. There will be limited evening activity at the Desert Discovery Center. This will limit the impact on any nearby uses with regard to lighting, noise, or activity.

Key Issues.

The site plan includes an outdoor amphitheater as a part of the Desert Discovery Center. This amphitheater will be used in conjunction with educational and support activities for the Center. The amphitheater will be located on the backside of the building over 800 feet away from the nearest residential area. It is not part of the first phase of development on the site.

Development Information.

- *Existing Use:* Undisturbed desert

- *Buildings/Description:* There will be three, one-story buildings. These will be designed to blend into the natural desert setting.
- *Parcel Size:* 543 + acres
- *Building Height Allowed:* 30 feet
- *Building Height Proposed:* 28 feet
- *Floor Area:* 22,000 +/- total square feet proposed
- *Parking Required:* The parking area will be 'zoned' based on the type of user and their particular needs, such as horse trailers, buses, visitors and regular trail users.
- *Parking Proposed:* 524 parking spaces

IMPACT ANALYSIS

Traffic.

Traffic for this facility will not typically occur at usual peak rush hour times. Traffic generation will most likely be highest on weekends and during special events but can be managed well at the main entrance. Some school and tourist bus usage is expected, mainly on weekdays.

Parking.

524 spaces will be provided for the total project and should be adequate, based upon the submitted traffic analysis.

Water/Sewer.

Existing water and sewer facilities are located within Thompson Peak Parkway. There is adequate capacity to accommodate the Discovery Center and associated uses. Water use should be limited given the strong focus of desert sensitive and green building design for this facility.

Police/Fire.

The closest Scottsdale Fire Station is located at the 100th Street and Bell Road. Except for occasional special events, this facility should have minimal impact on emergency services. It most likely will serve as a base for search and rescue operations and fighting wildfires, if such events occur in the nearby mountains.

Open space, scenic corridors.

The site will primarily be open space, and as such will be a major public window to the desert and the mountains.

Policy Implications.

This facility is in support of previously approved actions, including public votes, regarding the location, financing and planning taken on behalf of the McDowell Sonoran Preserve.

Municipal Use Master Site Plans Criteria.

The two key findings for support of a Municipal Use Master Site Plan are:

1. The site plan provides an amenity to adjacent properties.
2. The site plan proposes a municipal use of general community interest, as well as the southern gateway to the McDowell Sonoran Preserves.

The proposed site plan for this facility provides substantial buffering in the form of large setbacks and 317,041 square feet (7.3 acres) of parking lot landscaping, to provide sensitivity to nearby land uses. It will provide for a use that has long been awaited by the community. This project has been included in the city's Capital Projects budget.

Community Involvement.

In the mid-1990s the McDowell Sonoran Preserve Commission conducted a lengthy public process to identify access points to the planned Preserve. This location was identified as most suitable for the Gateway access to the Preserve given its overall accessibility. On February 16, 2006, a public open house was held and no opposition to this proposal was received.

Community Impact.

This facility will provide a major recreational and open space service and educational venue for the community. It will serve to further allow public access to and usage of the Preserve among multiple access areas so as not to overburden one location.

STAFF
RECOMMENDATION

Recommended Approach:

Staff recommends approval, finding that the proposal is not detrimental to adjacent properties and provides a substantial community need, subject to the attached stipulations.

RESPONSIBLE
DEPT(S)

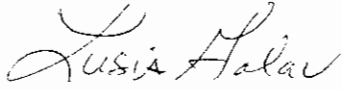
Planning and Development Services Department
Current Planning Services

STAFF CONTACT(S)

Don Hadder
Principle Planner
480-312-2352
E-mail: dhadder@ScottsdaleAZ.gov

APPROVED BY


Don Hadder
Report Author


Lusia Galav, AICP
Current Planning Director

ATTACHMENTS

1. Applicant's Narrative
2. Context Aerial
- 2A. Aerial Close-Up
3. Zoning Map
4. Stipulations
5. Additional Information
6. Citizen Involvement
7. City Notification Map
8. Site Plan

**GATEWAY ACCESS AREA / DESERT DISCOVERY CENTER
CITY OF SCOTTSDALE**

PROJECT NARRATIVE

General: The design of the Gateway Access Area and Desert Discovery Center has been developed in an effort to minimize impact on the native desert environment and the surrounding neighbors while creating a sense of entry and passage into the McDowell Sonoran Preserve. The project is planned to be constructed as a multi-phase project with the Gateway Access Area being completed in Phase 1 and the Desert Discovery Center being constructed in Phase 2. The project includes the following elements:

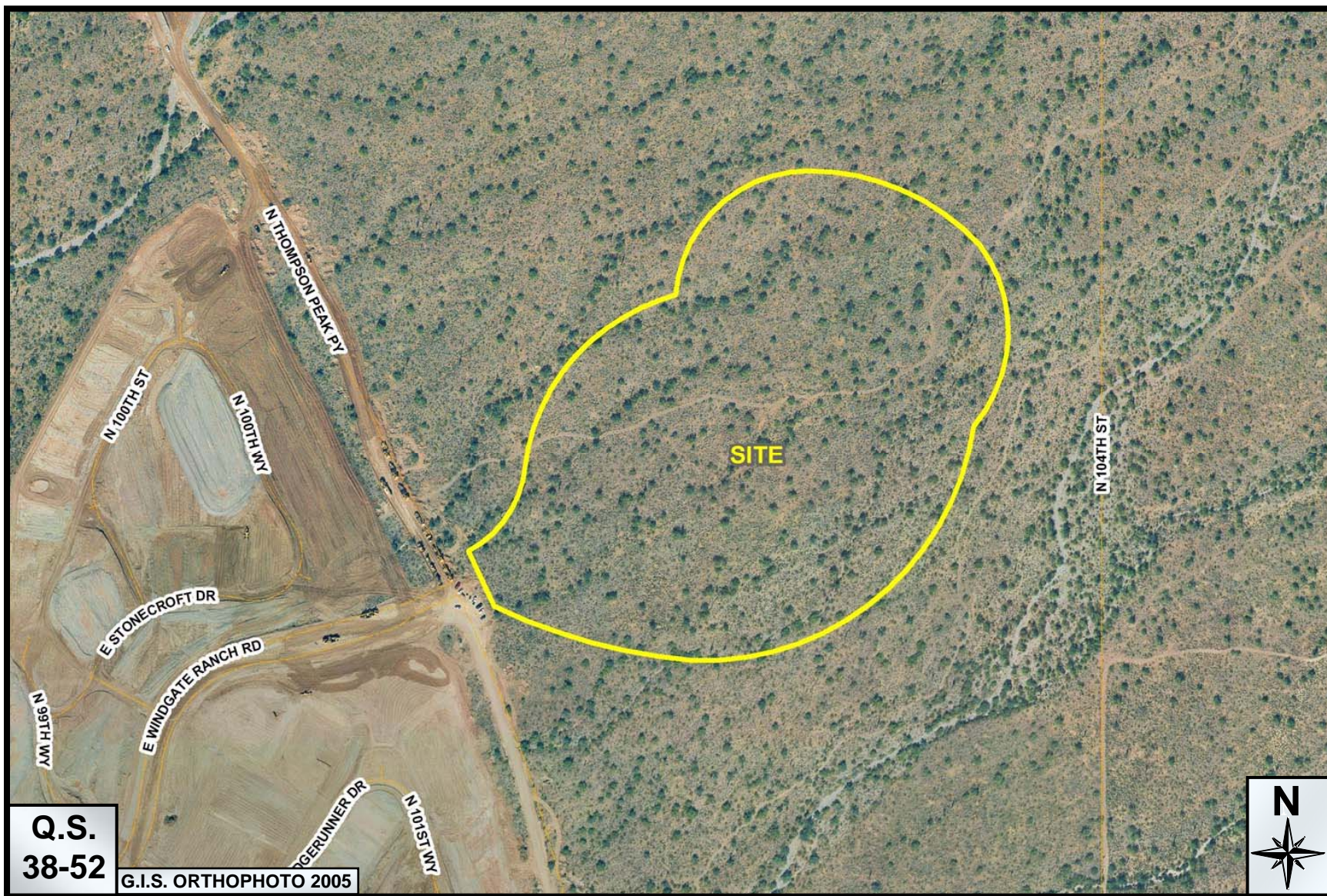
Parking: The entry gate area is developed with exposed aggregate concrete paving that will tend to slow traffic and create a sense of entry. The entry gate area also includes two rolling gates that will be utilized to open and close the access area. The entry drive and vehicular parking area is master planned for 500 parking spaces with 250 spaces constructed in the Phase 1. The equestrian staging area includes space for 24 horse trailers. The parking areas and driveways are developed with stabilized decomposed granite paving which will minimize the visual impact on neighbors, retain the natural desert character and minimize the increase in drainage from the parking area.

Lighting: The Phase 1 site lighting in the parking lot and around the building will include low level security lighting to be developed with LED bollard lights and recessed wall sconce fixtures in building walls and landscape walls. In Phase 2 pole-mounted fixtures will be added in the parking area. The use of pole mounted lighting will be limited to special evening events scheduled at the Desert Discovery Center. At all other times, the lighting will be the low level security lighting as described for Phase 1. This will help retain the natural character of the Preserve while minimizing impact on the neighboring residents.

Landscape & Grading: The parking is designed to fit between natural drainage patterns to minimize the grading disturbance required and will provide for the opportunity to retain the maximum amount of native vegetation without disturbance. All efforts have been made on the grading design to minimize the grading limits.

Structures: Phase 1 structures for the Gateway Access Area will include a restroom building, ramada, offices, storage building and a small open air amphitheater as well as a trail network that connects into the McDowell Sonoran Preserve trail system. The Phase 2 for the Desert Discovery Center will include an interpretive center, support offices, café with outdoor dining terrace, and a 400 seat outdoor amphitheater. The structures are all single story with a maximum height of 28 feet above natural grade. The main walls of the structure will be constructed with steel panels with a rust finish and cast-in-place concrete with a textured finish. In all the structures are very low in scale and incorporate materials that will blend well with the natural desert environment.





Q.S.
38-52

G.I.S. ORTHOPHOTO 2005

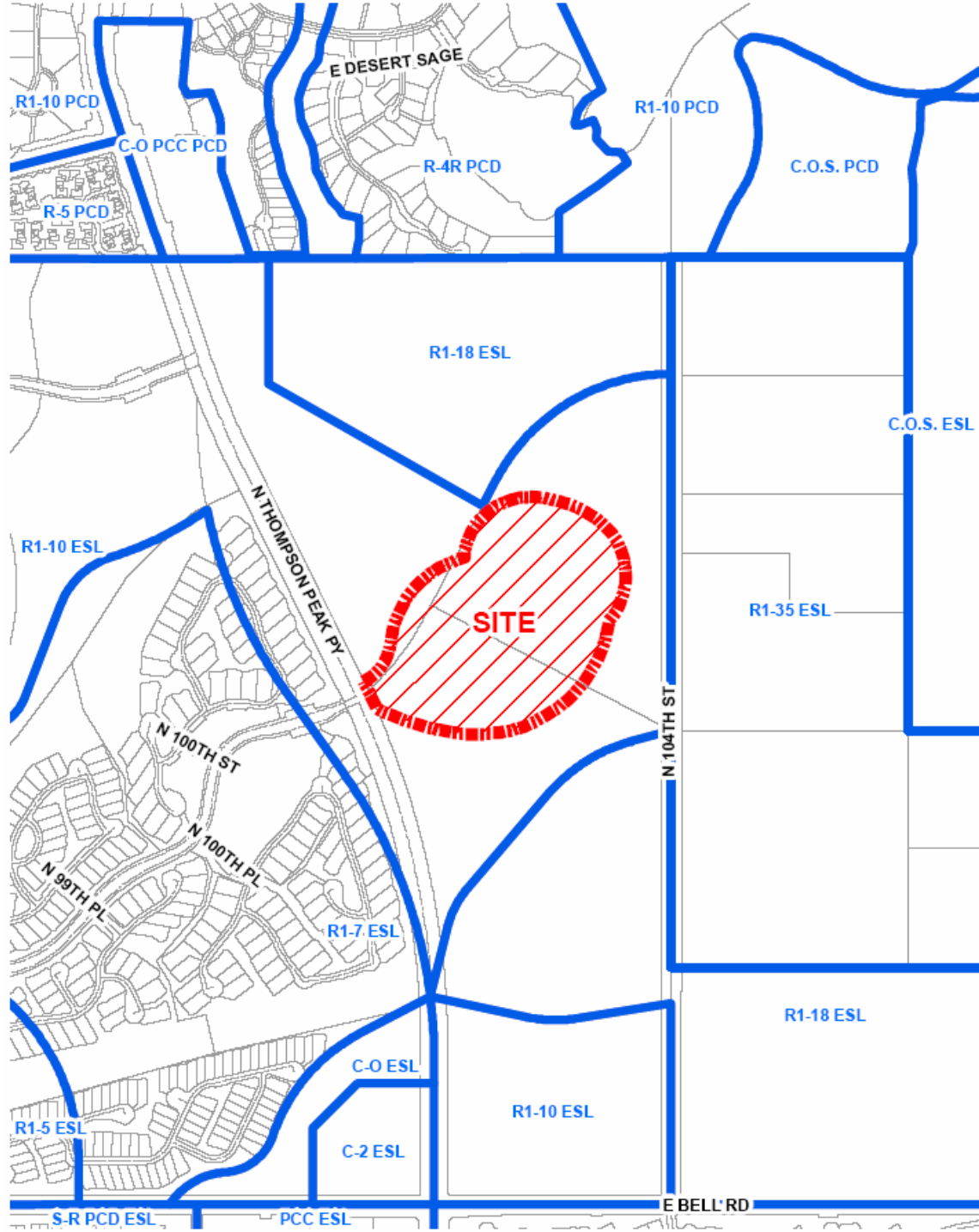


Gateway Access Area/ Desert Discovery Center

10-UP-2006

ATTACHMENT #2A

Zoning Map



STIPULATIONS FOR CASE 10-UP-2006

PLANNING/ DEVELOPMENT

1. CONFORMANCE TO DEVELOPMENT SUBMITTAL. Development shall conform with the site plan submitted and dated 5/4/2006. These stipulations take precedence over the above-referenced site plan. Any proposed significant change, as determined by the Zoning Administrator, shall be subject to subsequent public hearings before the Planning Commission and City Council.
2. BUILDING HEIGHT LIMITATIONS. No building on the site shall exceed 28 feet in height, measured from existing natural grade.

ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN

1. ALTERATIONS TO NATURAL WATERCOURSES. Any proposed alteration to the natural state of watercourses with a 100 year peak flow rate estimated between 250 cfs and 749 cfs shall be subject to Development Review Board approval.
2. VISTA CORRIDOR WATERCOURSES. All watercourses with a 100 year peak flow rate of 750 cfs or greater shall be designated as Vista Corridors.
3. CONSTRUCTION ENVELOPE-STAKING. Before issuance of any building permit for the site, the developer shall survey all construction envelope boundaries and stake all such boundaries, in conformance with the approved grading plan. Such surveying and staking shall be subject to inspection and approval prior to construction in each development phase.
4. NON-PROTECTED NATIVE PLANTS. Native plants which are not protected by the Scottsdale Revised Code native plant provisions, but which are necessary for on-site revegetation, are suitable for transplanting, or are necessarily uprooted for road building or similar construction, as determined by city staff, shall be stockpiled during construction and shall be replanted in on-site landscape areas by the developer before the final site inspection.
5. LOCATION OF INTERNAL STREETS AND DRIVEWAYS. Before the Development Review Board submittal, the developer shall stake the alignments for all internal streets and driveways subject to inspection by city staff to confirm that the proposed alignments result in the least environmental and hydrological impact. The Zoning Administrator may approve the use of rectified aerial photographs in lieu of on-site staking.
6. OUTDOOR LIGHTING. The maximum height of any outdoor lighting source shall be 16 feet above natural grade at the base of the light standard except for recreation uses, which shall comply with the outdoor lighting standards of the Scottsdale Zoning Ordinance.
7. FINAL CONSTRUCTION ENVELOPES. Before issuance of any building permit for the site, the developer shall stake the construction envelopes for inspection by city staff. All construction shall take place inside the construction envelopes.

CIRCULATION

1. PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION PLAN. With the Development Review Board submittal, the developer shall submit a Pedestrian Circulation Plan for the site, which shall be subject to city

staff approval. This plan shall indicate the location and width of all sidewalks and pedestrian pathways.

DRAINAGE AND FLOOD CONTROL

1. **CONCEPTUAL DRAINAGE REPORT.** With the Development Review Board submittal, the developer shall submit a conceptual drainage report and plan subject to city staff approval. The conceptual report and plan shall conform to the Design Standards and Policies Manual - Drainage Report Preparation. In addition, the conceptual drainage report and plan shall:
 - a. Identify all major wash corridors entering and exiting the site, and calculate the peak discharge (100-yr, 6-hr storm event) for a pre- versus post-development discharge comparison of ALL washes which exit the property.
 - b. Determine easement dimensions necessary to accommodate design discharges.
 - c. Demonstrate how the storm water storage requirement is satisfied, indicating the location, volume and drainage area of all storage.
 - d. Include flood zone information to establish the basis for determining finish floor elevations in conformance with the Scottsdale Revised Code.
 - e. Include a complete description of requirements relating to project phasing.
2. **FINAL DRAINAGE REPORT.** With the improvement plan submittal to the Planning and Development Services Department, the developer shall submit a final drainage report and plan subject to city staff approval. The final drainage report and plan shall conform to the Design Standards and Policies Manual – Drainage Report and Preparation. In addition, the final drainage report and plan shall:
 - a. Provide final calculations and detailed analysis that demonstrate consistency with the accepted conceptual drainage plan and report.
3. **STORM WATER STORAGE REQUIREMENT.** On-site storm water storage is required for the full 100-year, 2-hour storm event, unless city staff approves the developer's Request for Waiver. See Section 2 of the Design Standards and Policies Manual for waiver criteria.
 - a. If applicable, the developer shall submit to the Planning and Development Services Department a Request for Waiver Review form, which shall:
 - (1). Include a supportive argument that demonstrates historical flow through the site will be maintained, and that storm water runoff exiting this site has a safe place to flow.
 - (2). Include an estimate for payment in-lieu of on-site storm water storage, subject to city staff approval.
 - b. The developer shall obtain an approved Stormwater Storage Waiver. The approved waiver shall be obtained before the Development Review Board (DRB) case can be scheduled for a DRB hearing, and before the developer submits the improvement plans to the Planning and Development Services Department.
4. **CONDITION FOR ISSUANCE OF GRADING & DRAINAGE PERMIT.** Before the issuance of a Grading & Drainage Permit:
 - a. The developer shall certify to the Planning and Development Services Department, that it has retained an Inspecting Engineer by completing Part I (Project Information) and Part II (Owner's Notification of Special Inspection) of the Certificate of Special Inspection of Drainage Facilities (CSIDF); and,

- b. The Inspecting Engineer shall seal, sign and date Part III (Certificate of Responsibility) of the CSIDF.
5. CONDITION FOR ISSUANCE OF CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY AND/OR LETTER OF ACCEPTANCE. Before the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy and/or a Letter of Acceptance:
 - a. The Inspecting Engineer shall seal, sign and date the Certificate of Compliance form.
 - b. The developer shall submit all required Special Inspection Checklists and the completed Certificate of Compliance form to the Inspection Services Division. The Certificate of Compliance form shall be sealed, signed and dated by the Inspecting Engineer, and shall be attached to all required Special Inspection Checklists completed by the Inspecting Engineer.
6. AS-BUILT PLANS. City staff may at any time request the developer to submit As-built plans to the Inspection Services Division. As-built plans shall be certified in writing by a registered professional civil engineer, using as-built data from a registered land surveyor. As-built plans for drainage facilities and structures shall include, but are not limited to, streets, lot grading, storm drain pipe, valley gutters, curb and gutter, flood walls, culverts, inlet and outlet structures, dams, berms, lined and unlined open channels, storm water storage basins and underground storm water storage tanks, bridges as determined by city staff.

WATER

1. BASIS OF DESIGN REPORT (WATER). Before the improvement plan submittal to the Planning and Development Services Department, the developer shall submit a basis of design report and plan to the One Stop Shop in Development Services. The report must be approved by the Water Resources Department before the developer submits the improvement plans to the One Stop Shop. The basis of design report shall conform to the Design Standards and Policies Manual. In addition, the basis of design report and plan shall:
 - a. Identify the location, size, condition and availability of existing water lines and water related facilities such as water valves, water services, fire hydrants, back-flow prevention structures, etc.
 - b. Identify the timing of and parties responsible for construction of all water facilities.
 - c. Include a complete description of requirements relating to project phasing.
2. APPROVED BASIS OF DESIGN REPORT. Before the improvement plan submittal to the Planning and Development Services Department, the developer shall have obtained approval of the Basis of Design Report.

WASTEWATER

1. BASIS OF DESIGN REPORT (SANITARY SEWER).). Before the improvement plan submittal to the Planning and Development Department, the developer shall submit a basis of design report and plan to the One Stop Shop in Development Services. The report must be approved by the Water Resources Department before the developer submits the improvement plans to the One Stop Shop. The basis of design report shall conform to the Design Standards and Policies Manual. In addition, the basis of design report and plan shall:
 - a. Identify the location of, the size, condition and availability of existing sanitary sewer lines and wastewater related facilities.
 - b. Identify the timing of and parties responsible for construction of all sanitary sewer facilities.
 - c. Include a complete description of requirements relating to project phasing.

2. APPROVED BASIS OF DESIGN REPORT. Before the improvement plan submittal to the Planning and Development Services Department, the developer shall have obtained approval of the Basis of Design Report.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS

1. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA) REQUIREMENTS. All construction activities that disturb one or more acres shall obtain coverage under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Permit for Construction Activities. [NOI forms are available in the City of Scottsdale One Stop Shop, 7447 East Indian School Road, Suite 100. Contact Region 9 of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency at 415-744-1500, and the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality at 602-207-4574 or at web site <http://www.epa.gov/region9>.]

The developer shall:

- a. Submit a completed Notice of Intent (NOI) to the EPA.
 - b. Submit a completed Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) with the improvement plan submittal to the Planning and Development Services.
2. NOTICE OF INTENT (NOI). With the improvement plan submittal to the Planning and Development Services Department, the developer shall submit a copy of the NOI.
 3. SECTION 404 PERMITS. With the improvement plan submittal to the Planning and Development Services Department, the developer's engineer must certify that it complies with, or is exempt from, Section 404 of the Clean Water Act of the United States. [Section 404 regulates the discharge of dredged or fill material into a wetland, lake, (including dry lakes), river, stream (including intermittent streams, ephemeral washes, and arroyos), or other waters of the United States.]
 4. DUST CONTROL PERMITS. Before commencing grading on sites 1/10 acre or larger, the developer shall have obtained a Dust Control Permit (earth moving equipment permit) from Maricopa County Division of Air Pollution Control. Call the county 602-507-6727 for fees and application information.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR CASE 10-UP-2006

1. DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD. The City Council directs the Development Review Board's attention to:
 - a. a plan indicating the treatment of washes and wash crossings,
 - b. wall design,
 - c. the type, height, design, and intensity of proposed lighting on the site, to ensure that it is compatible with the adjacent use,
 - d. Vista Corridor watercourses (all watercourses with a 100 year flow of 750 cfs or greater),
 - e. alterations to natural watercourses (all watercourses with a 100 year flow of 250 cfs to 749 cfs),
2. NATIVE PLANT PRESERVATION. The owner shall secure a native plant permit as defined in the Scottsdale Revised Code for each parcel. City staff will work with the owner to designate the extent of the survey required within large areas of proposed undisturbed open space. Where excess plant material is anticipated, those plants shall be offered to the public at no cost to the owner in accordance with state law and permit procedure or may be offered for sale.

**Gateway Access Area/Desert
Discovery Center
10-UP-2006**

Attachment #6 Citizen Involvement

The above attachment is on file at the City of
Scottsdale Current Planning office,
7447 E Indian School Road, Suite 105.

Gateway Access Area/Desert Discovery Center



ATTACHMENT #7



CASE NO.: 59-PA-2006
ZONING: R-10 / R-1-18 / R-1-35
GROSS FLOOR AREA:
 PHASE I: 2,315 S.F. GATEWAY
 PHASE II: 19,800 S.F. DESERT DISCOVERY
 CENTER
NET SITE AREA: 543 ACRES

TOTAL OPEN SPACE:
 PHASE I: 23,535,719 S.F. (539 ACRES)
 (99% OF NET LOT AREA)

 PHASE II: 23,536,877 S.F. (540 ACRES)
 (99% OF NET LOT AREA)

TRAILHEAD (MAJOR COMMUNITY)	REQUIRED	200-300	SPACES
BICYCLE PARKING (1:10 RATIO)	REQUIRED	20-30	SPACES

ACCESSIBLE PARKING	10	SPACES
TRAILHEAD PARKING	240	SPACES
EQUESTRIAN PARKING	24	SPACES
TOTAL PARKING	274	SPACES
BICYCLE PARKING	20	SPACES
TRAILHEAD (PHASE II - FUTURE)	250	SPACES
TOTAL W/ FUTURE PARKING	524	SPACES

TRAILHEAD (PHASE II)	250	SPACES
TRAILHEAD EQ. (PHASE I)	274	SPACES
TOTAL MSTR. PLAN PKNG	524	SPACES
BICYCLE PKG. (PHASE II)	20	SPACES
BICYCLE PKG. (PHASE I)	-	SPACES
TOTAL BICYCLE MSTR. PLAN PKG.	20	SPACES

GATEWAY ACCESS AREA / DESERT DISCOVERY CENTER
18333 N. Thompson Peak Pkwy., Scottsdale, AZ 85259
Use Permit No. 59-PA-2006 / DR No. 11-DR-2005



REVISION

10-UP-2006

5-4-06

4 MAY 2006	PLOT DATE
wg0504	PROJECT #
BG	DRAWN BY
PAW	CHECKED BY
SHEET TITLE	

SITE PLAN

MU-5

ATTACHMENT #8

